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ABSTRACT

This instructor's guide contains materials for a 30-hour course that focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening and targets ways to improve these skills on the job. The course description lists target audience, general objective, and typical results observed. The next section gives instructors basic information related to providing successful educational programs in a workplace setting, an instructor's lexicon of strategies and principles that can be used in teaching, instructor's role and responsibilities, and course objectives. An explanation of lesson format lists six parts of the template used to design the lessons--understanding/outcome, materials, demonstration, exercise/engagement, workplace application, and evaluation/comments. A sample template and explanation of each part follows. A section on planning and scheduling deals with time requirements, class size, expected outcomes, prerequisites, and suggested timing for each lesson. Lessons are organized into the following categories: introductory lessons and materials; reading lessons and materials; writing lessons and materials; listening and speaking lessons and materials; and newsletter production lessons and materials. Possible discussion topics for activation of prior knowledge and learning engagements are provided; supplementary reading materials and samples are suggested and provided when possible. Appendixes include a glossary, pre- and posttests, answer key, and supplementary materials--a family habits quiz derived from Stephen Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." (YLB)

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ED 424 385

WORKPLACE EDUCATION

Effective Communication

Improving Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening skills in the Workplace

Instructor's Guide

Nancy Ruetz

Project ALERT

CE 077 295

Wayne State University
College of Education

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Course Name: Effective Communication Skills

Description: This course will focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening. It will target ways to improve these skills on the job. Many workers may not think of reading, writing, speaking, and listening as a major part of their job, but few employees can get through an average day without the need to communicate clearly. Communication skills are the basis for getting and giving information. Through the development of a newsletter, participants will have an opportunity to improve their skills and become successful learners. The development of a newsletter will encompass a variety of contributions, created by the learners.

The objectives for this course are:

- To identify the 4 stages of learning.
- To adapt communication to the audience.
- To compare behavioral skills of good interpersonal communication with those that obstruct communication.
- To improve communication skills through opportunities for practice.
- To identify skills for more active listening .
- To recognize the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond appropriately.
- To observe basic body signals of behavior and understand what body language "says."
- To use strategies for reading and writing based on the purpose of the task.
- To improve writing skills through practice, including legibility, spelling, clarity, accuracy, completeness and vocabulary development.

Length of Time: This course is designed to provide 30 hours of instruction.

Target Audience: Employees with various skill levels can be accommodated in this class. However, this course is not meant to be a beginning reading and writing course. It is important that students who are very limited readers and writers speak to the instructor to arrange a separate time to focus on improving additional skills.

General Objective: Participants in this class will improve their knowledge of communication skills -- reading, writing, speaking, and listening, -- through the discussion and practice of sound principles of learning based on job-related and real life situations.

Typical results observed: Students are highly motivated and have high interest level in pursuing the requirements of the course.

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Rationale for Curriculum Approach

The Whole Language philosophy provides the best approach for developing the learner. It supports success in the classroom and on the job. The integration of the curriculum reinforces all of the skills required to improve job opportunities. The key to providing a successful Whole Language program is assuring that every learner will be recognized as a potentially successful student. The learners must be co-partners in this collaborative effort. Learners are an integral part of the learning situation. They are valued for what they bring to the learning experience. The instructor is regarded as a facilitator of learning rather than the major source of knowledge and information.

Recognizing and building upon their unique past experience is crucial for integrating new learning. In this process, continual dialogue and interaction are key to the instructional process. The curriculum is built on the learners' strengths, not weaknesses, and accommodates the variety of learning styles and cultural orientations. It also encourages the learner to assume responsibility for his/her own learning. Recognition of success in the classroom enables learners to feel good about themselves. Learners become empowered workers by understanding the job process and how they contribute to the big picture.

Overall, raising the learners' level of self-awareness on the job, in the home, and in the community, will create a more satisfied and productive member of the work force.

Many employees may not think of reading, writing, speaking, and listening as a major part of their job, but few employees can get through an average day without the need to communicate clearly. Communication skills are the basis for getting and giving information in our lives. The more clearly one sees the value of these skills, the easier it will be to improve them. In most companies, performance on the job will be judged, at least in part, by ability to communicate--to read, to write, to speak, and to listen.

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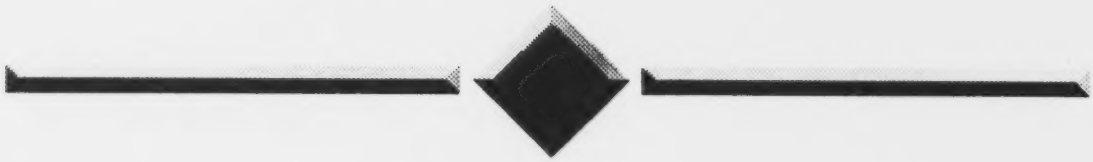
Making it work



This section of materials is provided to give instructors basic information related to providing successful educational programs in a workplace setting.

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Adult learners

General characteristics of adult learners:

1. Purposeful learning occurs with adults experience a problem or recognize a gap between where they are and where they want to be, then start to draw on resources to acquire the learning they consider necessary to close the gap.
2. One of the most important issues to consider from the adult learner point of view is "What's in it for me?" An adult needs to know that there is real value in what is being taught. Customize and adapt lessons to suit your students. Make a regular effort to point out what benefit the instruction has for the student. Many times students are unaware of the applications of learning. Make sure you point out possible applications of knowledge.
3. Adult learners insist that learning have relevance and value now, contrasted to youthful learners whose education is largely subject-centered and future-oriented. Most adults are already busy with their jobs and families, so the learning must be worthwhile.
4. Adult learners will drop out of educational situations that are seen as not accomplishing their own agenda.
5. The central organizing principle for adult learning must be around finding solutions for problems adults face. Emphasis must be on helping adults learn to cope with problems they face. Therefore, the instructor must be more *person*-centered than subject-centered.
6. Adult learners are well aware of what they need to know, and they like to participate actively in all phases of their education--assessment, instruction, and evaluation.
7. Many adult learners come into programs with the "baggage" based on a history of negative educational experiences. It is absolutely essential to provide a safe, non-threatening atmosphere where risks can be taken with out fear of humiliation or embarrassment.

Environment

Creating a safe environment for learning is a key factor in success. One of the elements that is part of a safe environment is multicultural sensitivity. The following suggestions should be considered as the lessons are delivered:

1. Use multiple instructional strategies to accommodate all learning styles. See *Learning Styles* for more information on this topic. Also see *Teaching Auditory Learners, Teaching Kinesthetic Learners; Teaching Visual Learners.*
2. Avoid ethnocentrism (belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group), use of stereotypes, critical or judgmental attitudes, fear, and rigid expectations. Strive to

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address the various cultures represented in the group. Try the AAAA approach to Cultural Diversity: Awareness; Acceptance/Appreciation; Action

3. Seek to understand the unique motivations of your audience in the workplace. Each worksite has a particular culture. It is important that you strive to understand and become a part of that unique culture.

4. Use materials that are not slanted toward any particular group.

Above all, the instructor must establish a learning environment in which diversity is valued. Students need to feel that their cultural backgrounds are viewed as assets to the class.

Teaching Auditory Learners

(Adapted from materials from presentation, *Designing Workplace Training to Accommodate Culturally Diverse Learners*, Douglas Jones, Linda Mrowicki, Workplace Education Division of THE CENTER-RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION, delivered Jan. 1996.)

Auditory learners learn best by listening to others. They usually do well in a "traditional" classroom.

Audio tapes: Have students or groups listen to a tape or create their own tapes for each other to listen to.

Music: Record key points on an audio cassette with background music. Write a song, rap, jingle or rhyme about the learning material.

Guest speakers: Invite subject matter experts to talk about a topic. This can be outsiders or members of the class.

Reading: Read or tell a story, for variety use music in the background.

Discussions: Use questions to get others in the class involved. Not only can students learn from the instructor, but they can learn by listening to each other, and the instructor can learn from listening to the students.

Repetitions: Repeat things out loud.

Directions: When giving directions, be sure to give them orally.

Mnemonic devices: Mnemonics are artificial aids to memory. The keyword HOMES can be used to remember the names of the Great Lakes; H = Huron O = Ontario M = Michigan E = Erie S = Superior. Sentences and rhymes can also be used; to remember which direction to turn a screw to tighten = Leftie Loosie, Rightie Tightie. Steps in basic division can be incorporated into the sentence: Donald (or Donna) made some candy bars = D = divide M = multiply S = subtract C = compare B = bring down.

Be the Instructor: Pair the class and have one individual teach the other, then reverse roles.

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Concert Review: The instructor uses transparencies, pictures, charts, etc. that were used in presenting the lesson as a means of review. While playing soft music, the instructor displays and reads the instructional materials. A variation is to have a willing student read the instructional materials.

Oral Cloze: Use oral cloze (fill in the blank) activities to repeat key information

Teaching Kinesthetic Learners

(Adapted from materials from presentation, *Designing Workplace Training to Accommodate Culturally Diverse Learners*, Douglas Jones, Linda Mrowicki, Workplace Education Division of THE CENTER-RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION, delivered Jan. 1996.)

Kinesthetic learners learn best by doing. They like to be physically expressive. They also need to stretch and move periodically. The following are activities that enhance kinesthetic learning.

Walking and studying: Allow students to walk while they study.

Role playing: Use props and costumes while role playing. Can be done with a group or in pairs.

Action learning: Includes anything that requires people to use their bodies in some way while they learn. It could be a song, a dance, a mime, a physical acting out of a technology or process, or an active performance of the learning material where learners become interacting components of the material they are learning.

Strolling review: Have the group prepare colorful flip charts as a means of review. Hang them around the room. Play music softly as individuals walk silently around the room, carefully observing the wall display or examining the mind maps created by other learners. A variation is to play music while individuals stroll around and review.

Being the Coach: Ask one partner to be the coach while the other partner learns to perform a new task. After one run, reverse roles.

Demonstrating: Allow class members to demonstrate and physically do an activity. Provide opportunities for practice using repeated motion.

Writing: Writing requires students to use parts of their bodies. Write on surfaces with a finger. Write in the air. Trace on sandpaper. Take notes. Write lists.

Sequencing: Using a topic that has several steps or procedures, give each individual a piece of paper with the words or a graphic depicting one step or procedure. Ask the group to move around until they are in the correct sequence. An option is to act out what is on their piece of paper.

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Teaching Visual Learners

(Adapted from materials from presentation, *Designing Workplace Training to Accommodate Culturally Diverse Learners*, Douglas Jones, Linda Mrowicki, Workplace Education Division of THE CENTER-RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION, delivered Jan. 1996.)

Visual learners like to process, store, and retrieve information visually. The following are examples of activities that instructors can use to facilitate the visual learner.

Demonstrations and modeling: Since visual learners like to understand the "big picture," it is important to show or model all of what is expected before breaking it into its components.

Draw: Simple illustrations can be used to reinforce important information. Encourage students to draw as a means of committing key information to memory.

Imagery: Imagery is the mental visualization of objects, events, and arrays. The typical technique is to ask students to form a mental picture. It usually works best for concrete information and less well for abstract information. Images are better remembered if they are vivid and show some type of movement.

Study Guides: Study guides are used to summarize key information. They are useful for reviewing key points. Instructors can create study guides, or better yet, allow students or groups of students to prepare a study guide.

Graphic organizers: These are visual tools which can show the relationship of categories of information. Charts, graphs, and maps can be used to show relationships visually. They are also good because they usually show or explain a concept holistically. Instructors can create blank charts or matrices for the learner to complete.

Mental Imagery: Have learners rehearse or practice a knowledge base or a skill in their minds.

Mind mapping: Ask individuals to mind map a lecture or presentation, a written lesson, an article, an audio tape, a recollection, an experience, or anything relative to the learning situation that might be significant.

Note taking: Encourage visual learners to take notes using words or pictures. This provides them with another opportunity to visually rehearse the information. Note taking can also be done using a map which allows them to see the "big picture."

Create notebooks: Using notebooks for class projects provides another way for students to see the information in their own words. It allows them to "customize" the information and make it their own.

Color codes: Visual learners like to see different things/views. Use color as a means of focusing attention, or use it as a means of changing the environment to add interest visually.

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Study cards: Study cards use the visual sense to present the information. They can be used individually, with partners, or in large groups. Cards can be prepared by the instructor or students can prepare their own.

Pictures: Watch TV, filmstrips, movies, videos, etc. Another option is to have the group create their own video.

Mnemonics: Create acronyms, draw visual chains, or develop acrostics.

Directions: When giving directions, give them visually.

Tips on Teaching

1. Use logical sequences. Avoid jumping into topics without developing background or relevance for the skill at hand.
2. Control length of lessons into manageable chunks. Many employees come into classes at the end of a long and tiring day. Pace lessons so students can have short breaks.
3. Give recognition and encouragement. It is vial that you recognize and encourage all your students' progress toward their individual goals. Unfortunately, often adult learners are not supported by friends and family who view time spent in class as time taken away from them.
4. Use coaching. Model new skills. Point out the problems or pitfalls many students have with lessons. Repeat explanations several times or a period of time and several ways to accommodate all learning styles. Be there for them.
5. Encourage involvement. Make sure students hear you validate how important it is to learn new skills. Techniques that make provisions for active involvement of students will achieve learning faster than more passive teaching techniques.
6. Give feedback. Adults need to be reassured that they are on track. Give feedback often, and be sure to give negative f..dback along with something positive.
7. Use summaries and advance organizers. When materials are detailed or involved, help students see the "big picture."
8. Questions will help you assess how your students are understanding. Make sure they are not accusatory in tone. It is possible to inadvertently press a "hot button" based on a students' unpleasant school memories. Maintain a safe atmosphere for students when questioning them.
    - Direct questions are usually *yes* or *no*, or short answer. They are easy to control.
    - Open-ended questions are more likely to prompt discussion. They are not as easy to control

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Instructor's Lexicon

The following lexicon is provided to remind teachers that there are a variety of strategies and principles that can be employed in teaching. When you are not getting the response you expect, when faces are blank or bored, when attendance starts to slip--*try something else*.

Anticipation Guides (Readance, Bean, and Baldwin) Prepare students for reading by asking students to reach to a series of statements prepared by the teacher in advance. Expected response is TRUE or FALSE.

Application of concepts to different situations- learning that is applied immediately is retained longer and is more likely to be used immediately than that which is not. Techniques must be employed that encourage the immediate application of any material in a practical way.

Application to individual situation --Provide real life or real work scenarios for which students read different texts to solve problems

Article/pictures

5 W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why/How)
Antonyms/Synonyms
Match or rewrite topics/headlines
Change time, place, people and rewrite
Write questions with higher levels of critical thinking

Brainstorming--All responses are accepted, no judgment. Activates background knowledge. Gets students thinking before they read or write.

Cartoons- students fill in blank balloon with appropriate response

Categorical Overview-- Write down associations , think how they are related, categorize information, and label.

Cloze– It is a method of systematically deleting words from a prose selection and then evaluating the success a reader has in accurately supplying the words deleted. In a given passage the first and last sentence is provided in tact. Thereafter selected deletions are made. *Ex.* Every 5th or 10th word; Initial/final letter; Word/ phrase; All nouns or verbs, etc.

Clustering-- Similar to mapping, adds visual dimension to the process of organizing ideas, helps students separate ideas into categories. Improves organization of thoughts for speaking or writing.

Coded Vocabulary--Student marks words that he knows with an asterisk, check mark for words he has heard of, and circles the words that he does not know.

Compare and contrast–Write or discuss similarities (compare) and differences (contrast)

Concrete Items/Demonstrations-- Including actual items in classes helps those learners who need more tactile or kinesthetic learning experiences understand. Visual and audio learners have an easier time with traditional formats than other kinds of learners.

Continuum of Descriptors--Write adjectives on a line to show degrees of modification, such as minuscule, tiny, small, average, big, huge, enormous

Cued Retelling (See article on Retelling--Free and Cued)

Cubing--On a paper cube, write down one of the following words on each side of the cube: describe, compare, associate, analyze, apply, argue for. When writing or discussing

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an object/concept, have students write about it using the suggestions from each side of the cube.

Designated Roles (Cooperative learning)

Listeners note points of disagreement
" " what is not said
" " questions to ask

DRAT (Directed Reading/Thinking Activity-Haggard, 1985)

Activate prior knowledge
Predict what will be covered
Read to designated point
Confirm, revise, or elaborate prediction with information from text
Continue in similar fashion through text.

Dyads confirm/explain
make decisions
draw conclusions

Find someone who . . . --an ice breaker activity to raise awareness of the depth of experience and diversity in the class. Typically you can only get another person to sign your sheet once. Categories can be as generic as "find someone who has more than 5 brothers and sisters" or "find someone who speaks another language" to class specific information like "find someone who has read a the work of Edgar Allan Poe." It can be designed for many topics but always helps students get comfortable with each other.

Flash card directions--Challenge learners to read more than one word at a time by giving direction quickly on flash cards. Ex. Put your hands on the table.

Free-writing/thinking

Can you think of a time . . .
Questions regarding topic

GIST--requires readers to reduce the first sentence of a passage to 3 or 4 words. The next two sentences to 5 or 6 words. The next three sentence to 7 or 8 words. This requires readers to make meaning and determine their own key words.

INSERT (Interactive Notation System for Effective Reading)--Students place a √, X, +, !, ?, ?? and * besides ideas they read to indicate whether they understand it (√), are excited about it (X), don't understand it (?) , are stumped by it (??), or want to remember it (*).

Interviewing--Encourage students to generate a list of questions that would give them the information they would like to find out about someone. Have students break into pairs and interview their partner, using questions. Then let each introduce his/her partner using the information obtained.

Jigsaw/segmented reading --Instructor assigns parts of a selection to different readers. Readers read their part silently. Each reader shares what they read with group.

Journals--Students write reaction to class, write comments, write questions. Instructor does not judge them on technical competencies. May be used to tie topic of class to learner. If topic is American Education, journal writing questions could be: Where did you go to school? What did you like best in school? What irritated you the most? Why did it irritate you? Who was your favorite teacher? Why did you come to this class?

Key word predicting activity--Instructor selects passage and notes 10 key words. Words are shared with learners who are asked to predict content. Learners should try to

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make sense of key words. Next, learners read passage and find out if predictions are on target.

K-W-L--(Ogle, 1986) Students identify what they **K**now about a topic , what they **W**ant to find out about a topic, and what they **L**earned about the topic.

LEA (Language Experience Approach, Stauffer, 1970) Students dictate sentences about an experience as instructor transcribes. This text become the reading material for that student.

Learning style--The 3 major learning modalities:

Visual-needs to see material
Auditory-needs to hear material
Kinesthetic- needs to move around while learning

LINK-- L= List I= Inquire N=Note K=Know List all associations for concept/topic on overhead/chart; inquire - give examples, clarifications about associations; note - write what comes to mind for one minute (overhead off/chart covered); know - what I know now about this concept/topic?

List and skip– instead of looking up words as you read, use a *List and Skip* bookmark. Write down unfamiliar words from reading selection. After completing selection, look to see if any words were understood through use of context.

Main Idea-- explanation overheard by instructor between students. "How would you tell your mama what the (article, book, chapter) was about if you were calling her long distance?

Mapping (Baumann, 1991)--Arranging key terms into a diagram that is meaningful to the student. It can include the following:

Key words/phrases
Structure
Questions
Connecting lines/circles

Is a graphic representation of the relationship between major ideas and supporting details.

Metacognition - Being aware of how you learn, and the process of thinking through a learning situation. The development of self-questioning or monitoring of patterns of thinking, which helps students become an independent learners who can recognize and correct their processing errors.

Questions with others

What do you think about . . .?
Why is . . . used for . . .?
What would you do if . . .?

Paired Questioning --Divide students into pairs, read passage, close book. Each in turn asks questions with the other answering; tells important ideas; paraphrases or summarizes; agrees/disagrees; draw picture or graphic representation of what learned.

Reading strategies– Good readers bring what they know about the topic to the print on the page. They are active readers. Good readers take chances, they risk being wrong. Good readers guess at or skip words they don't know and read on for help. Good readers expect the material to make sense. Good readers try to match reading speed to what they are reading.

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Reading techniques

see: Flash card directions
see: GIST
see: Key word predicting activity
see: List and Skip
see: Word Bank

Reciprocal questioning

Students work in pairs
Both read a portion of a reading selection.
One asks the other a question.
Continue reading selection
Alternate asking questions.

Retelling/rewriting- Can be free retellings, cued retellings, and/or cued comprehension questions. Provides an opportunity for students to reflect and revise their thoughts. Teachers can record students thoughts without having to infer right or wrong choices. Possible prompts: *Write down everything you can remember about the selection you just read.* Provide a list of words from the passage, and then, *Use these words to help you remember everything you can about the passage. See Retelling--Free and Cued*

Retelling--Free and Cued - A **free retelling** allows a reader to structure his or her demonstration of comprehension without the constraints often imposed by a testing situation. If the objective of the assessment is to find out how the student is thinking about the content rather than how much he can demonstrate that he knows, the unprobed (free) retelling is probably the best response.

Researchers find the free written retelling to be an invaluable tool as they explore issues related to reading comprehension. Retellings allow analysis of the link between the response and the original source (the text). Many teachers are reluctant to use them because they do not lend themselves easily to objective scoring.

Since remembering and understanding are not synonymous, there is value to using retrieval cues as an aid to comprehension. By including word or phrase cues the reader has the freedom to indicate his or her comprehension according to personal dictates while simultaneously providing bits of text to help dissolve the confusion between what is understood and what is remembered. **Cued retellings** may be the best of both worlds.

In order to do this form of assessment, the teacher needs to have comprehension questions in mind. the perspectives on comprehension that are to be checked should be noted.

Were the students responses text explicit (Just the facts recited)
Were the responses full of nonessential details? (Not important to understanding the essential message of the passage)
Does the student understand the essence of the passage? (Main idea)

Unless you assess students' comprehension with the intent to learn what students do and do not remember, you can only speculate about their comprehension and the appropriateness of your instructional focus.

Say Something- 2 students read a passage to a designated point Each has to say something about the reading

Segmented reading --see: Jigsaw

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Semantic map--see **Mapping** and **Webbing**

Sequencing--*Paragraphs*

- Articles are cut into parts based on content.
- Student reads each part
- Student orders the parts based on content

Pictures

- Cartoons or picture sequences are cut apart
- Student orders the part based on content

T Chart -- (Johnson & Johnson)Write the name of a skill to be learned or practiced and draw a large T beneath it. Write "looks like" on the left side of the T and "sounds like" on the right side. On the left side list behaviors that one might see in someone exhibiting this skill. On the right side list phrases that might be used by someone exhibiting this skill.

Think aloud- (Davey)Instructor models and tells the thought process for an instructional piece of material.

Three-way rotation--Three different ways of saying the same thing.

Time line-- Events are placed on a time line to visualize the relationship of events in respect to what else was happening at the same time.

Total Physical Response (Asher)--incorporates listening to directions or commands like, "STAND UP!, SIT DOWN!" and they respond to commands without speaking. Used most effectively in early ESL situations.

Transformation- charts, graphs, maps, forms -learn key idea and transform into different format/media Ex. Act out without words Make a chart or form to explain information to others

Webbing-- Similar to semantic mapping - as a graphic representation of the relationships between major Supporting details are then supplied for the secondary ideas in a logical fashion.

Word bank--a versatile tool for vocabulary learning. Excellent warm up before reading and writing, assessing prior knowledge. Select a topic related to reading. "When I think of _____ I think of _____" Instructor fills in blanks then asks, "What do you think of? Try to generate 25-50 words per topic.

a. Builds critical thinking skills by clustering words that belong together.
b. Try adding prefixes and suffixes. Discuss how changing the form can change meaning.
c. Focus on spelling; note roots and affixes, number of syllables.
d. Plan a writing exercise. Determine organization according to purpose.
   How to = chronology
   Personal experience = narrative
   Description = topic characteristics.
e. Add vocabulary words as they are discovered through reading or conversation

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Instructor's Role and Responsibilities

There are four main responsibilities in your role as instructor of this class.

1. **Instruction** -- As the instructor you will choose the lessons and gauge the depth of instruction based on the needs of your students and the accomplishment of the objectives. It is important to tie these concepts to the workplace.

2. **Assessment** -- This vital part of your role should be handled with great sensitivity. Many adults have not been in a classroom setting for a long time. For some, the testing situation and facing the results of tests is an extremely stressful experience that can cause them to drop out of the class. Diffusing the anxiety of the testing situation is a necessary part of your role.

The pretest (Preview) should be giving before instruction begins to gauge the level of your students' understanding and prior knowledge of course content. The posttest (Review) should be given at the end of instruction. Results will be compared to see if instruction made a difference.

3. **Keeping attendance records** -- In some work situations, attendance is mandatory. In others, employees are paid to attend and accurate attendance records should be maintained.

4. **Other records** -- Anecdotal comments and observations, especially in regard to learning or change, should be documented. Companies and unions are very interested in this kind of feedback and may want to use quotes from participants for recruitment or promotional activities.

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Course Objectives

The objectives for Effective Communication are:

1. To identify personal strengths and weaknesses in regard to communication skills.
2. To identify and understand the 4 stages of learning.
3. To identify your audience and adapt your communication to them
4. To compare behavioral skills of good interpersonal communication with those that obstruct communication
5. To identify skills for more active listening
6. To recognize the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond appropriately.
7. To observe basic body signals of behavior and understand what body language "says."
8. To use strategies for reading and writing based on the purpose of the task.
9. To improve writing skills through practice, including legibility, spelling, clarity, accuracy, and completeness.

Explanation of Lesson Format

Objectives for each course have been identified. Lessons have been designed to assure objectives are accomplished. Lessons are designed with a template that has six parts:

I. Understanding/Outcome

II. Materials

III. Demonstration

IV. Exercise / Engagement

V. Workplace Application

VI. Evaluation / Comments

An sample template and explanation of each part follows.

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Explanation of Lesson Format

I. Understanding /Outcome: Focus of the lesson.

II. Materials: What is needed and helpful to do the lesson. Accompanying supplementary materials: Materials supplied or designed to support the lesson.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. The activation of prior knowledge is a critical piece of the Whole Language philosophy. Lessons will always begin with suggestions for activation of prior knowledge, so students can make a connection to their past experience.	Suggested activities. Examples of possible scenarios or questions to initiate discussions. See *Instructor's Lexicon* for an explanation of possible methods.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
A step by step procedure for the lesson. Specific activities to engage the students with instructor supervision. The instructor is provided with this framework with the understanding that adaptations may be made to suit the individual or the group.	1. Suggested activities. See *Instructor's Lexicon* to familiarize yourself with the variety of strategies that can be used..

V. Workplace Application: How this new learning, understanding, or concept is applied in the workplace.

VI. Evaluation/Comments: This space is provided for instructor's commentary and/or evaluation of the level of success of the lesson. This may include the duration of time on task, student comments about the lesson, instructor comments about the lesson, and instructor observations on how to improve, expand, or further customize the lesson.. Initially, this information was used to revise and improve pilot lessons for replicable models of instructions. As instruction continues, it is a valuable way for the instructor to keep track of particular strengths or weaknesses of a lesson, things to remember when teaching, etc.

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Planning and Scheduling

Time Requirements

This class is designed to contain at least 30 hours of instruction. The format of the course allows the instructor the flexibility to customize lessons to fit into available time slots. Due to the variability of students skill levels and interests, the instructor must make many decisions on lesson length and inclusion.

Size of Class

This course can be adapted to work with any size group. If a very large number is scheduled, after initial discussion and activation of prior knowledge, smaller groups should be formed so the instructor can facilitate learning and individual needs will be served.

Expected Outcomes

Participants of this class will improve their knowledge of communication and communication skills-- reading, writing, speaking, and listening-- through the discussion and practice of sound principles of learning and application to job-related and personal situations.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this class except for a willingness to improve communication skills. The materials are targeted to participants with 4-6 grade level reading and writing skills. Those with more limited skills in reading and writing will be given assignments that will enhance their skills without assuming a particular level of reading or writing. Many lessons will be verbal, so limited readers and writers will not feel uncomfortable.

What this course won't do

This course is not meant to be a beginning reading and writing class. It is important that students who are very limited readers and writers are identified and encouraged to speak privately with the instructor for a separate time to focus on improving those skills.

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Suggested timing for each lesson

It is difficult, if not impossible, give time estimates for lessons. The goal is to suit the lesson to the learners. The interest in the topic, amount of prior knowledge, and skill levels of the students will determine the length of the lessons. Our experience has shown a time range from 20-75 minutes per lesson is workable, given the limits of different sites.

How These Lessons are Ordered

The there are three introductory lessons to lay the groundwork for the course. (They are: *Identify our strengths and weaknesses in communication skills; To become familiar with Maslow's 4 stages of learning in relation to communication skills; To identify your audience and adapt communication to them.* Once these three lessons have been taught, the instructor can determine which lessons are of the most interest and will be suited to the needs of the students.

The lessons are organized into main topics of:

- Introductory lessons and materials
- Reading lessons and materials
- Writing lessons and materials
- Listening/Speaking lessons and materials
- Newsletter Production lessons and materials

If students' skill levels are very low, it may not be possible to produce a newsletter. Lessons would focus on improving reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

The lessons are designed to give the Whole Language approach to the topic. Possible discussion topics for activation of prior knowledge and learning engagements are provided. Supplementary reading materials and samples have been suggested and provided when possible.

The instructor is encouraged to bring examples and anecdotes to supplement or replace existing materials. The guide has been designed to provide you with as much as possible to produce meaningful learning experiences. But the lesson designers do not assume that they know best what is appropriate for a particular lesson or group of students. That is left to the instructor's discretion.

The course objectives are numbered and followed by the lessons that support them. The section in which the lesson is located is noted in **bold-face** print.

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1. To identify personal strengths and weaknesses in regard to communication skills.

    - To identify our strengths and weaknesses in regard to communication skills. **Introductory lesson**

2. To identify and understand the 4 stages of learning.

    - To become familiar with Maslow's 4 stages of learning in relation to communication skills. **Introductory lesson**

3. To identify your audience and adapt your communication to them

    - To identify your audience and adapt your communication to them. **Introductory Lesson**

4. To compare behavioral skills of good interpersonal communication with those that obstruct communication

    To understand and identify the behavioral skills that improve interpersonal communication. **Speaking/Listening**

5. To identify skills for more active listening.

    - To become aware of the characteristics of a good listener. **Speaking/Listening**

    - Interviewing/Listening: To phrase pertinent questions, listen to responses, and produce a report in a written or oral format. **Speaking/Listening**

6. To recognize the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond appropriately.

    - To recognize and understand the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond accordingly. **Speaking/Listening**

7. To observe basic body signals of behavior and understand what body language "says."

    - To become aware of and be able to identify the behavioral skills that improve interpersonal communication. **Speaking/Listening**

8. To use strategies for reading and writing based on the purpose of the task.

    - To recognize and use different strategies for reading based on the purpose of the material being read. **Reading**

    - Locating relevant information: To find and use information in reading materials to perform various tasks as needed. **Reading**

    - Reading: Recognize, understand, and use technical vocabulary. **Reading**

    - To learn the basic techniques of skimming and scanning and their appropriate uses. **Reading**

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9. To improve writing skills through practice, including legibility, spelling, clarity, accuracy, and completeness.

- Newsletter 1: Raise awareness of and determine a purpose for an employee-produced newsletter. **Newsletter**
- Overview of an employee newsletter. **Newsletter**
- Newsletter 2: Rewriting and limiting. **Newsletter**
- Newsletter 3: Drafting articles. **Newsletter**
- Newsletter 4: Revising articles for clarity. **Newsletter**
- Newsletter 5: Editing articles for spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical problems. **Newsletter**
- Editorial writing: To recognize that editorial writing expresses an opinion that can be supported or refuted. **Newsletter**
- Note writing. **Writing**
- Writing: Completing forms. **Writing**
- To develop skill in completing workplace forms that are accurate and legible. **Writing**
- To recognize and use different strategies for writing based on the purpose of the material to be written. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of legibility and find ways to improve it when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of accuracy and improve accuracy when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of completeness and improve completeness when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of clear writing and improve clarity when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of spelling and improve spelling when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To recognize the importance of and improve grammar, punctuation, and word usage when writing on the job. **Writing**
- To improve writing skills and effectively process new learnings, ideas, and personal growth through keeping a journal. **Writing**
- To identify needed information and techniques for writing effective notes. **Writing**

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Introductory Lessons

Identify our strengths and weaknesses in communication

I. Understanding /Outcome: To identify our own strengths and weaknesses in regard to communication skills.

Materials: Flip chart, paper, pencils. Accompanying supplementary materials: *Reasons for improving communication skills* *Introduction to interpersonal communication.*

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Think of something good about yourself. 2. Think of something you would like to change about yourself. 3. How hard is that to do?	Suggested activities. Point out to students that we know ourselves better than anyone else, including identifying our strengths and weaknesses. It is sometimes easier to focus on our weak points, than our strong points.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Make a list of the kinds of communication skills that need to be improved. The list can be separated by skills that are more for *Work* and for *Home*.	1. Focus on the 4 skills of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening at home and at work. This discussion should generate an understanding of how communication impacts our lives.
2. Let the class decide what the major focus of the class should be based on the list of skills generated. Emphasize the importance of improving all 4 communication skills.	2. Are there areas of improvement that everyone agrees are necessary? Remind students that improvement of one skill will have a positive effect on the others. If you improve your writing, your reading and listening may also improve because you are seeing and hearing related information
3. Why should we improve communication skills?	3. Reasons for improving can be brainstormed and generated on a list on the board or in journals. See *"Reasons for*

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	improving communication skills."
4. If appropriate, discuss the kind of skills that are necessary when writing a company newsletter.	4. Since a vehicle for improving all communication skills can be the production of a company newsletter, lead a discussion of how each of the communication skills can be improved. This is not recommended if the skills levels of the group are very low.

V. Workplace Application: Communication is a vital skill at work.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Setting your goals

With very few exceptions, the quality of our lives depends on the level of the interpersonal communication skills that we possess as well as the level of communication skills of those in our lives. Though we may not be able to improve the skills of others, we CAN improve our own communication skills.

At home and at work, communication is an important part of success.

The 4 main channels of communication are:

reading	speaking
writing	listening.

Information comes TO a person by listening and reading.

Information goes FROM a person by speaking and writing.

We communicate with our behavior and appearance.

It is important that we learn to use all our senses when we communicate so we can make judgments about the importance and the believability of the information that we receive.

Our eyes and ears take in much information automatically when we communicate. There are times when things don't look like they add up. A person might say everything is fine, but may look very upset and tense.

Improving interpersonal communication skills can be the key to opportunities in every area of life.

Take some time to think about how skilled you are or would like to be in the areas of: Reading

Writing

Speaking

Listening

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Reasons to improve communication skills

To understand better/ to help someone else understand better

To get information/ to give information

To learn/ to teach

To improve confidence

To find out about needs of others

To ask better questions

To make accurate evaluations

To enhance relationships

To solve problems

To show you care

To make intelligent decisions

To prevent waste (of time, resources, etc.)

To make money (get a raise)

To avoid embarrassment

To be a better friend and/or mate

To give appropriate responses or answers

To increase attention span

To improve your vocabulary

To improve your personality

To use the gifts of sight, speech, and hearing

_____

_____

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To become familiar with Maslow's 4 stages of learning in relation to communication skills

I. Understanding /Outcome: To become familiar with Maslow's 4 stages of learning in relation to communication skills.

Materials: Notebook for journal, pencils/pens, flip chart, blackboard, chalk Accompanying supplementary materials: *Maslow's 4 stages of Learning*

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Who needs to learn?	Suggested activities. 1. Though students may name many different groups of people, the point of the discussion is that EVERYONE needs to learn during their entire lifetime.
2. Why do we need to learn?	2. There may be several answers, but learning helps us keep up with change; and things are always changing.
3. Ask students to remember when they were first hired into this company. What kinds of things did they have to learn?	3. Company policies, procedures for doing things, the actual job (depending on experience), etc.
4. Do people always realize what they have to learn? When you started your job, did you realize everything that you would be expected to learn?	

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Read the handout, *Maslow's 4 stages of learning.*	1. Instructor decides if oral or silent reading is appropriate for the group. Students can be paired for reading.
2. Ask students to suggest different	2. Instructor can model the stages of learning

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areas in which they are at different stages of learning. Try to come up with at least one area for each stage of learning.	that s/he has experienced in different areas. Stage 1 may be difficult to come up with, but there are job skills that may be required of employees in the future that are not even known today. Stage 2 may be the computer Stage 3 may be wiring a lamp or trying to fix the brakes on a car. Stage 4 may be driving a car.
3. Think of a time when you learned something and went through all 4 stages of learning.	3. This activity may be done in a group discussion format or students may prefer to write about it in their journals.
4. Which stage is the easiest? Most difficult?	4. Answers may vary. But discussion is useful and no consensus is necessary. Everyone may find the stages to be different in regard to difficulty.
5. How do you feel in each stage?	5. A discussion of how feelings are affected by the different stages of learning should follow. Stage 2 and 3 may be frustrating for some personality types.

V. Workplace Application: Understanding the stages of learning will help employees to understand the process that one goes through when learning new skills on the job.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Maslow's 4 stages of learning.

Abraham Maslow developed a theory about how people learn. He believed there are 4 stages of learning.

STAGE 1. *Unconscious incompetence*. **We don't know that we don't know**. Think of energetic children who see someone riding a bicycle for the first time. They want to do it, but they don't realize that they don't know how. Sometimes we have no idea about what we will be expected to learn. Companies sometimes make decisions to purchase new technology that requires employees to have more advanced skills. In many cases employees are the last to find out what skills they will need in order to adapt to the changes in the workplace.

STAGE 2. *Conscious incompetence.* **We know that we don't know**. This stage is the awakening. The little children get on the bicycle and fall off. They immediately go from the first stage to the second stage. Now they know that they don't know how to ride the bike. In work situations, employees find out that changes, like computerized machinery or equipment, have been planned or new processes are being put into place and they will need new skills. They may be very uneasy about this.

STAGE 3. *Conscious competence.* **We work at what we don't know to try to learn it**. This is where most learning takes place. People practice the skill they want and repeat it. The children carefully practice steering, balancing and pedaling and concentrate on doing it. Do you remember falling off your bike when you were a new rider when someone called to you and you turned your head and forgot to steer? This is the actual training or learning stage where employees are taught the skills or the processes that they need to continue to do their jobs. There is a wide range of feelings connected with this stage. For some employees, learning is challenging and exciting. For others, especially if they have had negative learning experiences in the past, this is a very stressful time.

STAGE 4. *Unconscious competence*. **We don't have to think about knowing how do it**. The skill happens at an automatic, unconscious level. The children can ride the bicycles without thinking about it. This is the time when employees have learned the skills they need to accept the changes that have taken place.

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To identify your audience and adapt your communication to them.

I. Understanding /Outcome: To become aware of your "audience" when communicating.

Materials: Accompanying supplementary materials: *Four year olds at the fire station.*

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever been in a situation where the speaker did not suit his talk to the audience? 2. How did it make you feel?	Suggested activities. 1. Think of speeches you have listened to or meetings at work when the information was either too advanced or too simple. 2. The message was probably lost because the listener was frustrated or annoyed by the speakers.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Read *Four year olds at the Fire Station.*	1. Instructor decides how to best accomplish this based on the skills levels of the class.
2. Why was the first field trip to the fire station a disappointment to the children?	2. The fireman's talk was far too advance for the young children. He didn't think about his audience.
3. How did the teacher's communication change from the first field trip to the second one? How did the fireman's communication change from the first visit to the second one?	3. The teacher asked for a guide that was familiar with younger children. She also suggested the kinds of things that the children were interested in seeing and doing while they were at the fire station. The fireman fit his talk to 4 year olds and they got to hear about and do the kinds of things they were interested in.
4. What can speakers do to make	4. Speaker should make sure they know the

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sure their talks are suited their audience?	background of their audience. Is the audience familiar with the topic, or is some background necessary?

V. Workplace Application: Improving communication is vital in the workplace.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Four year olds at the Fire Station

There was a nursery school class of 4 year olds who went on a field trip to the fire station. The teacher had read the children books about the fire department. The children had discussed their experiences with the fire department as a group. They were very excited to actually visit the fire station because many had never seen fire trucks and firefighters.

When they arrived at the fire station, a very nice, older firefighter greeted them at the door. He said he didn't usually do this--talk to groups--but he would do his best. He walked the children through the fire station. He gave them a very technical description about the station and the equipment. He talked about nozzle pressures and told them in detail about how the gauges work to control water pressure. At first, the children fidgeted during his long talk. Soon their behavior became a problem. In only a few minutes the children were bored. The trip was a disappointment to them and a disaster for the teacher.

The next time the teacher organized a field trip to the fire station, she was careful to ask for a fire fighter who was familiar with small children. The teacher suggested the kinds of things the children were interested in seeing and doing while at the fire station.

That visit went much better. The children got to sit inside the fire truck, ring the bell, and sound the siren. The firefighter asked them if they knew why fire trucks had bells and sirens. He let them answer and then directed them to the actual reasons. They also got to try on a firefighter's hat, coat, and boots. He told them why firefighters had special clothing. They got to see where firefighters sleep and eat. He told them how fire fighters took turns cooking and cleaning up. The children and the teacher were very pleased with their visit.

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Speaking / Listening Lessons and Materials

To understand and identify the behaviors of good interpersonal communication

I. Understanding /Outcome: To become aware of and able to identify the behavioral skills that improve interpersonal communication.

Materials: Blackboard, flip chart Accompanying supplementary materials: T-Chart , T-Chart example, *How Behavior Affects Communication, Is Smiling Important.*

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever heard the old saying, "Actions speak louder than words?" Is it true? Why? Describe a time when someone's actions spoke louder than their words. 2. Why do lawyers coach their clients on how to look and behave before going to court?	Suggested activities. 1. Discussion should focus on what actions or behaviors help or hurt communication. An example of a person talking to their spouse while the spouse is watching television. The spouse keeps saying, "I'm listening, go ahead and tell me more," but continues to watch TV 2. Appearance and behavior have a strong influence on how one is perceived and judged by others.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Have a discussion and or demonstration of the kinds of behaviors that help and hurt good communication. How does a person look when they are bored or not interested in the present situation because they have something else to do?	1. How does a person look when they are really listening and paying attention to someone who is speaking with them. What does a good listener say. A T-chart might be constructed with "looks like" "sounds like" labels. Another T Chart with what poor listening skills "look like" and "sound like" should be constructed to contrast the difference. The same kind of discussion could be applied to speaking. Be sure to

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	address topics of eye contact, posture and movement, gestures and facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and characteristics of the voice. A discussion of how this varies by culture is pertinent here. Different cultures and nationalities have different standards of acceptable behavior.
2. As an employee how can you affect how people react to you by your appearance and behavior?	2. The discussion should make it clear that each person has the ability to influence how they are perceived by others by changing their behavior and appearance. One might stand up straight or sit up straight and look their boss in the eye while he is talking rather than sit with one's feet up and read a magazine when the boss comes in.
3. How does a person's voice affect their message? Think of situations where the way the voice sounded influence what the listener thought. When can you be too loud or too soft?	3. By speaking in a distinct, clear voice that is appropriate for the situation, the speaker can affect how the message is received. Discuss appropriate tone and volume in a variety of situations.

V. Workplace Application: Improving communication is vital in the work place.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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The 3 parts of a spoken message
There are three main parts of every spoken message.

1. The message itself--the words that are used (*Verbal*)
2. The voice-- how the voice sounds, how the voice modulates (intonation), if it goes up and down as compared to being monotone or dull, and how loud or soft it is, also called projection. (*Vocal*)
3. The look of the speaker-- how the speaker uses his face, expressions, and body movements while speaking. (*Visual*)

An effective speaker knows how to put all three together so the message is consistent. Often speakers give inconsistent messages because the 3 parts don't add up. Think of a person who tells you everything is "fine" when you can see eyes full of tears and hands that are shaking.

The way a person looks while speaking is usually the most important part of the message. In a recent poll, over 50% said that the visual part of the message gives the most information. The voice itself is the next most important part of the message. Almost 40% said the intonation and projection of the voice determined how the message was received. Less than 10% said the words were the most important part of the message.

Watch for these behaviors
There are many behaviors or body and facial movements that give clues to the listener.

1. *Eye communication*. It is best to look steadily and sincerely at your listeners.
2. *Posture and movement*. Standing tall or sitting straight and moving naturally and easily is recommended. Going back on one hip may send the subconscious message that says, "I don't want to be here." Also rocking side to side, or going back and forth on your heels and toes says you'd rather be doing something else.
3. *Gestures and facial expressions*. Try to be relaxed and natural when you speak. Avoid nervous gestures like pushing up your glasses or tapping your fingers or toes. Try to recognize what your nervous gestures are and consciously try to avoid them.
4. *Movements*. Make direct movements when you are speaking, movements that have a purpose. Never back away from your listeners. Move toward them, especially at the beginning and end of your communication.

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Keep in mind that different cultures have different ideas about how much space should be between people. If you have ever felt uneasy because your personal space was invaded, you know what that distance is for you. Remember also, that some people do not want to be touched. Some speakers invade the personal space of others when they touch the arm or shoulder of their listener.

5. *Voice and vocal variety*. Use your voice as though it were an instrument. Messages are lost in dull, monotone voices.

6. *Non-words and repetitious words*. Avoid using non-words like "um" or "er." This is very distracting. Repeating words like "you know" "OK" or "and so" should be avoided.

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Is smiling important?

Smiling is important-- especially if it fits the situation. People have a strong tendency to smile or not to smile. When it comes to smiling, people in business can be sorted into 3 groups:

- those who have naturally open and smiling faces
- those who have neutral faces that can change quickly to a smile or a frown
- those who look serious and intense whether they are or not.

The smilers have a distinct advantage when communicating with others. Listeners are usually more open to their ideas. Smilers can also give bad news more readily.

Those who have neutral faces, can learn to use smile in appropriate situations. Those who have serious and intense faces have a disadvantage when communicating. They may not even realize how their face looks. You may know someone at work or in your neighborhood who has the reputation of being "mean" or "hard to talk to" but once you get to know them, you realize that their expression doesn't really project the person inside.

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Answer Key to Effective Communication I- Preview/Review

1. False We learn our entire lives. Learning never stops.
2. True
3. True
4. False How a person talks is the most important part of the message.
5. False You can learn good speaking skills and improve dramatically.
6. True
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. True
11. True
12. True
13. False It is very important to watch body language when a person is speaking.
14. True
15. False You can learn good listening skills and improve dramatically.

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T Chart for Good Listening

Looks Like	Sounds Like
Listener has attention focused on speaker in the following ways:	
Head tilts and nods	"Can you tell me more?"
Hands are still	"Uh huh"
Eyes focused on speaker	"Can you give me an example?"
Body engaged not overly relaxed	"Do you mean . . .?"

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T Chart for _____

Looks Like	Sounds Like

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Improving listening skills, becoming a more active listener

I. Understanding /Outcome: To become aware of the characteristics of a good listener and to be able to use good listening skills.

Materials: Supplementary Materials: *Listening Attitudes and Behaviors, Listening Attitudes and Behaviors Scale, Design Sheet, Do you listen as well as you hear?, How well do you listen?, Listening Styles*

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Can you remember a positive experience when someone listened to you or you listened to someone else? 2. What happened to make it a good listening experience? 3. Think about a time when you thought someone was not listening to you.	Suggested activities. 1. This experience can be recent or in the past. The key is to remember an excellent listening experience. 2. Discuss characteristics of a good listener. What did the listener do or say to make it a good experience. List characteristics on a T-chart. (See T-Chart example on Good Listening, p. 39.) 3. Discuss the characteristics of a poor listener. What did the listener do or say to make a negative impression. List characteristics of poor listening on a T-Chart, (See p. 40.)

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
Give students a chance to rate their listening skills with *Listening Attitudes and Behaviors* before you begin the activities.	

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Activity 1. Divide into pairs of **speakers** and **listeners**. Take all the listeners into another room. Tell them to do everything they can think of to be a good listener for the first minute. The instructor will tell them when the minute is up. At that time the listeners will do everything they can think of to be a poor listener for one minute. Tell all the speakers to think of a topic that they can talk about for two minutes. (Option: Instructor can demonstrate this with a student who takes the speakers role.)	Activity 1. The purpose of this lesson is to demonstrate the difference between active listening and poor listening skills. Make sure the speakers **do not** know that the listeners' behavior is going to change.
2. At the end of the time, have the group come back together and have the speakers discuss what happened during the time they talked. How did it make them feel when the behavior changed?	2. Let speakers tell what they experienced as a result of the change in listening behavior. Instructor can list the kinds of reactions that were noted.
3. Go back to the T-Charts on Good or active Listening skills and Poor Listening skills and verify the entries discussed at the beginning of the session. Add entries that were noted after the exercise.	3. Reinforce the fact that listening skills impact how the speaker feels and how the message is received.
Activity 2: 1. Ask students to sit quietly at home, at work, in a shopping mall, or anywhere and write down every sound they hear. Instruct them to listen carefully and not to ignore any sound.	Activity 2 1. This activity should make students aware of how many different sounds are around us all the time. We hear a great deal, but we *make the choice to listen.*
2. Listen for 5 minutes and then	2. The amount of time is arbitrary, it can be

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write down everything they heard. 3. What sounds are easiest to remember? Did your mind wander while you were listening? Activity 3: *(Design Sheet)* 1. The instructor can lead this activity or have the students work in pairs, one being the speaker, the other the listener. 2. Give directions for drawing a design on a piece of paper that has several steps. 3. Listeners follow spoken directions to duplicate the design on their own paper. 4. Let speaker compare the design that directions were given for, to the one produced by the listeners. 5. Discuss why this was not easy to do. What kinds of feelings, both physical and mental, did you feel as a listener? Give students the Listening Attitudes and Behavior Scale Results so they can evaluate themselves.	less or more depending on students. 3. We remember sounds that are important, unusual, or interesting. Most people daydream often. Activity 3: See *Design Sheet*. This activity stresses the importance of listening for detailed directions and how verbal directions can be misunderstood.

V. Workplace Application: Active listening is a vital component of workplace communication.

VI. Evaluation:

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Design Sheet

Instructions: The directions are to be read only once. Do not repeat them. Pause a reasonable amount of time so the listeners can follow the directions. Continue reading directions even if some listeners appear to be having trouble following directions. For this activity no questions will be answered until the activity is completed.

SAY: I will only say each direction once.

1. Place a sheet of paper in front of you with the short side toward you.

2. Put a small square in the top left-hand corner.

3. Draw a straight line about one quarter of the way down the page from the bottom of the square.

4. Draw a horizontal line to the center of the paper.

5. Draw a circle about the size of the square at the end of that line.

6. Make a zig zag line from the upper right part of the circle to the upper right hand corner.

7. Draw a broken line about a quarter of the way down the right margin.

8. Draw a straight line back to the circle.

9. Sign your name beneath the circle.

10. Draw three lines under your name.

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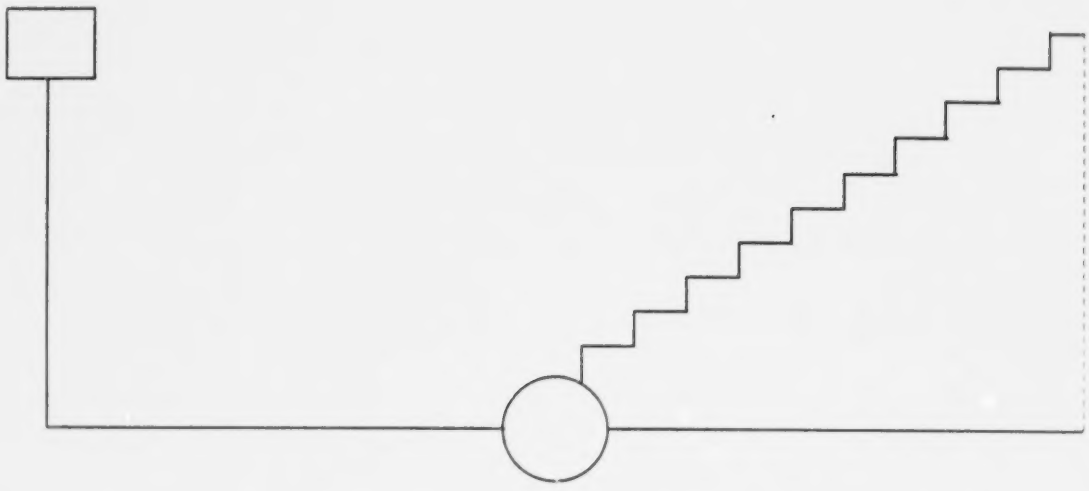

Your Name

_____

_____

_____

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Do you listen as well as you hear?

A 6 year old boy was taken to have his hearing tested. An audiologist is a person who has special training and equipment to measure hearing. The audiologist put him in a special room with a window. She asked him to signal her when he heard sounds. The audiologist used a machine that produced a wide variety of ranges and volumes of sounds. The little boy heard every one. He really enjoyed this test. It was like a game.

After the test, the audiologist talked with his mother. The audiologist said, "He can *hear* a fly walking on the ceiling, but I don't know how well he *listens*." What she meant was his ears were working fine. There was no reason to think he had any hearing problem. But listening is a voluntary act. In most cases, we decide whether or not we will listen.

Most of us are born with the ability to hear. We need to learn how to listen. Noise surrounds us all the time. We screen out many noises because we don't give them any importance. A word or tone of voice can signal us to listen-- something important may be happening. We choose what to listen to and this is often based on our past choices.

We choose to listen because:

1. The message is important
2. We are interested
3. We feel like listening
4. We have listened to this kind of information in the past.

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Listening Styles

Your listening style reflects your attitude and behavior and how you will respond. It can be a bridge or a barrier to good communication.
There are four main listening styles:

- Daydreamers
- Critical listeners
- Compliant listeners
- Active listeners

Daydreamers are most difficult to communicate with. There is a far-away look in their eyes. They are physically present, but not "really there." They are easily distracted and change the subject without warning.

Critical listeners are people who listen to find fault. They are so critical of each detail that they often miss the "big picture." Critical listeners may roll their eyes or frown as they listen. They may ask questions for clarification that are demanding and may make others feel cornered. Usually they have limited eye contact and no time for small talk.

Compliant or passive listeners are very quiet and don't give the speaker an opportunity to understand the real feelings or opinions of the listener. They are often shy and want to keep communications pleasant. They sometimes fake attention because they are silently thinking their private thoughts. They usually nod in agreement but add little to the discussion. They often say "That's nice," or "I see your point."

An *active listener* is involved with the speaker. A person who only hears is a passive receiver, like a tape recorder, who accepts and stores information.

1. *Active listeners* observe information with all their senses. They note the speaker's posture, body movements, facial expressions and other non-verbal clues. This is particularly important when what you see doesn't fit with what you hear.
2. *Active listeners* interpret. Some people talk in circles, leave out important information, can't find the right words, and still expect to be understood. Active listeners are good at filling in the gaps and weaving meanings from the threads of information given. To let someone know you are really listening, learn to paraphrase what they've said. Three keys for interpreting the message are:
    - Self knowledge--what you know about the topic
    - Desire to understand

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- Asking for clarification

3. *Active listeners* encourage speakers to tell them more if they need more information. It is a good idea to ask, "Can you tell me more about that?" rather than to ask specific questions and lead the conversation.
4. *Active listeners* check out what they hear as they listen to construct meaning. "Does this make sense?" "Is this accurate?" "Am I jumping to conclusions?" "Is the speaker jumping to conclusions?" But when checking out the information, it is better to ask more open questions like "what" and "how" than the accusing "why." A good listener doesn't make his questions feel like a cross examination. Examples of questions that clarify are:

   "Is this what you mean when you say . . .?"
   "This is how I interpret what you are saying . . . Am I correct?"
   "I'm not sure I understand your meaning, could you give me an example?"

The purpose of the check is for completeness, accuracy, and understanding. It tells someone that you've' been listening carefully and you have made some interpretations and want to make sure they are on target. The listener checks out when s/he is uncertain about something or is not sure s/he has the idea.

Sometimes, even when we want to listen, anger, frustration, grief or hostility can act as *emotional cotton* in our ears. We tend to hear what we expect or want to hear and filter out that which doesn't fit with our feelings and attitudes. The three keys to receiving the message are to:

- Pay attention
- Select what is important
- Recognize emotional messages

When you listen to someone, you unconsciously begin to compare how you would feel in a similar situation or what you would do if you found yourself in those shoes. Sometimes you may drift away from what a person is saying and focus on your reaction to it. This is NOT active listening because your focus is not on the person speaking. You only appear to be listening at these times, but you are really waiting for your turn to talk.

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How well do you listen?

Most people believe they are good listeners. We seem to believe because we are hearing, we are listening. Much of the time we THINK we are listening. Bad habits, like interrupting, allowing ourselves to be distracted, jumping to conclusions, daydreaming, or giving in to boredom, stop us from becoming the kind of listeners we think we are.

The only way to make progress is to consciously change. Change begins with honest self-evaluation of our strengths *and* weaknesses. First, identify your listening weaknesses and decide which changes you want to make. Second, plan positive steps for action. Third. practice specific listening skills at every opportunity.

You can make dramatic improvements in your ability to listen effectively. Be aware that listening is hard work. It requires patience, persistence, and a plan for listening skills to improve.

Experts estimate that 80% of each business day is spent communicating. At least half of that is spent listening. Communication skills in an average business day are broken down this way:

Listening	45%
Speaking	30%
Reading	16%
Writing	9%

Most people listen at an efficiency rate of about 50% during the first part of an oral communication. The efficiency rate drops quickly, and most people average a listening efficiency of about 25%

The best listeners we know are often our role models or professional counselors. The worst listeners we know are often related to us, probably because we save our worst behaviors for the people closest to us. It is not unusual to discover that our best friends think we are good listeners and our families think we are poor listeners. Bosses usually rank their employees' listening skills higher than they would rate themselves because we tend to listen to them better than others. We are more attentive when there is a direct payoff or penalty

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To recognize the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond accordingly

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize and understand the difference between factual and emotional communication and respond accordingly.

Materials: (A discussion lesson) Students may write a reaction if appropriate. Accompanying supplementary materials:

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Have you ever been in a situation where some topic, words, or attitude "hit a nerve?"	1. Everyone has emotional "hot buttons" that are pushed by certain topics or words.
2. What happened to your listening ability?	2. When hot buttons are activated we may react in several different ways; tune out, distort, prejudge, react. etc. Listening is certainly impacted.
3. Have you ever had a rough day at work, and found yourself growling at your family or friends when you got home?	3. A person's emotional state affects how they interact with others. Generate a list of things people say when they are upset.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Decide how simple commands might sound depending on different situations. Using the words "come here," how would you sound when you coaxed a frightened puppy or kitten out of a corner? How would you sound when you called to your 8 year old who had been caught playing with matches? How would a boss sound who had just been chewed out	1. The situation and emotional state may dictate how people communicate.

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by his boss and now needed to talk to an employee about a problem?	
2. Discuss some situations students have experienced when emotions or a tense situation affected communication.	2. Using students personal experiences, try to show that there are ways to handle potentially explosive situations. Simple statements like, "Sounds like you're having a bad day. I'll come back another time" or taking a deep breath and counting to 10 before you respond may help you choose your words more carefully.
3. Decide how tense situations can be defused or handled so they do not get worse. Brainstorm a number of ways to react.	3. It's important to stress that there is no right way to respond in a situation, there are many choices. Each person assesses the situation and makes a choice based on their skills, background and experiences.

V. Workplace Application: Understanding how to react in tense situations is a valuable skill in the workplace.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Interviewing/Listening

I. Understanding /Outcome: To phrase pertinent questions, listen to responses, and produce a report in a written or oral format.

Materials: Paper and pencils

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Have you (or someone you know) ever been interviewed?	1. Share personal experience. (Interviews for jobs, for articles in newspapers and magazines, etc.)
2. Have you ever seen an interview on TV that was really interesting? What made it interesting?	2. Discuss kinds of questions and the kinds of information received.
3. What makes a good interview?	3. List characteristics of a good interview. (The kind of information that is obtained, a new perspective of the person being interviewed, etc.)

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Individually or in a group, brainstorm questions that would provide information that would make an interesting interview.	1. Instructor lists questions that the group agrees are relevant and suitable.
2. Discuss suitability of questions. Why is the question being asked?	2. Questions that are embarrassing, humiliating, or insensitive should be avoided. Help students to consider the nature of the response.
3. In pairs, learners choose one list of questions to interview each other.	3. Each person in the group must agree to the question in order for it to be asked.

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4. Learners can report on their interview experiences either in journals or in class discussion.	4. Depending on students' skill levels and/or comfort levels, interviews can be written up for or can be used as an ice-breaking activity.

V. Workplace Application: Phrasing pertinent questions, listening to responses in interview situations, aids in improving communications skills.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Reading Lessons and Materials

To learn and use strategies for reading improvement based on the purpose of the material being read.

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize and use different strategies for reading based on the purpose of the material being read.

Materials: Have samples of different kinds of reading materials; income tax information, notes or memos from fellow workers, assembly directions for a piece of furniture or equipment, directions from a cake mix, a sports article, the financial section a newspaper, a telephone directory, a love letter, etc.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Think of how you might drive if you were visiting a wildlife refuge and wanted to approach a heard of deer? How would you drive if you were taking a person to the emergency room who was badly injured? Why is this so? 2. Would you read the comics the same way you would read a legal document?	Suggested activities. 1. Point out usual activities that we do at different speeds depending on purpose. 2. Emphasize that reading is adapted to the task.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Pass out different reading materials and have students tell how each might be read. How would they differ?	1. The instructor lists responses from students. They should point out reading from the beginning to end, reading fast, reading, slowly for details, reading to follow directions, reading to find a specific piece of information.

V. Workplace Application: Employees need to understand the variety of reading strategies that can be used in different reading situations.

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VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Reading: Locating Relevant Information

I. Understanding /Outcome: To find and use information in reading materials to perform various tasks as needed. Supplementary instructional aids: Reading Skills that Work, lessons 12 & 13.

Materials: Site specific materials

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Develop the concept by recalling times when small pieces of information are needed at home or at work.	1. When you want to find: a special program on TV a number in a phone book a part number in a catalog a certain article in a magazine the starting time of a movie
2. Develop the context of when it is important to find relevant information in job-related materials.	2. Learners give examples of situation when it is necessary to locate information at work. (Using the labor agreement to find policy in specific situations, like sick leave or personal days.)

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Understanding the format or organization of the material being used.	1. Use a variety of site-specific materials to illustrate strategies for locating relevant information.
2. If applicable: time order, alphabetical order, table of contents, index.	2. Use operator guidelines, union contract, company forms,
Note: Lesson will depend on the skills and needs of those in the class to find information in relevant	

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materials. Supplementary materials may be used.	

V. Workplace Application: The skill of locating relevant information is necessary in workplace situations.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Reading: Recognize, understand, and use technical vocabulary

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize, understand, and use technical vocabulary.

Materials: Site-specific materials, paper, pencils, dictionary.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Develop concept of specific vocabulary for a subject.	1. Do you remember going to buy a house or a car for the first time and hearing words that you did not understand? (Escrow, sticker price, invoice, balloon payment, etc.)
2. Brainstorm in pairs or groups, a list of words related to a topic.	2. Possible topics: Taxes, funerals, computers, sports, etc.
3. Discuss the need for understanding the words in order to understand the topic. Note: This will be an opportunity to demonstrate how learning never stops. Because you (the instructor) are new to the site and have little experience with the vocabulary, you will be giving your students an opportunity to teach you their language.	3. Words have different meanings in different situations (contexts). Ex. slug

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. In pairs in a group, generate technical vocabulary that is necessary for a new employee to understand	1. Ask students to recall when they were brand new to the job and the words that gave them trouble.

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daily operations. 2. Look at site-specific materials and find technical vocabulary. 3. Make a list of words and give definitions.	

V. Workplace Application: To recognize and understand technical vocabulary to be more able to read and use workplace materials.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Reading: Skimming and Scanning

I. Understanding /Outcome: To learn the basic techniques of skimming and scanning and their appropriate uses.

Materials: Site-specific materials Supplementary materials: *Reading Skills that Work*, Lesson 14

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. How does purpose determine action? Illustrate the need for suiting action to purpose by discussing life situations a home and at work.	Suggested activities. 1. How would you expect someone to drive if they were driving through a wildlife refuge looking for animals or birds? How you'd you expect someone to drive if they had an pregnant woman in the car who was ready to deliver? How does one cook for a special holiday celebration compared to a busy night after a long day at work? How do situations at work change depending on the situation?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Ask students to discuss the different ways they read based on their purpose for reading. 2. Generate predictions of what "skimming" and "scanning" reading techniques might be.	1. How do you read the Sunday paper? How do you read your favorite magazine? How do you read directions to do something you have never done before, like bake a cake, or wire a light fixture?

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3. Use site-specific materials to illustrate uses for skimming and scanning on the job. Note: This lesson will depend on the skill levels of the students and the relevance of their needs to skim and scan.	

V. Workplace Application: To enhance techniques for reading workplace materials.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Writing Lessons and Materials

To learn strategies for writing improvement based on the purpose of the material being written

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize and use different strategies for writing based on the purpose of the material to be written.

Materials: Birthday card, grocery list, formal letter, wedding invitation, application form, directions to a location, letter to the editor of a newspaper, letter to a friend.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. What is the difference between the way a grocery list and an application for a bank loan are written?	Suggested activities. What determines the way something is written? Who will read it? Is it formal, informal? Is accuracy necessary? What is the intention?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Give students different items and let them decide what they need to know when writing.	1. The point of this lesson is that writing is a skill that changes according to the needs of the task. Certainly we would not write a letter to the president of a company on a dirty piece of scrap paper, but that would work just fine for a grocery list, or a telephone message at home.

V. Workplace Application:

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Writing: Fit the task to the purpose

Good writers must write accurately, completely, and clearly. It takes more than good spelling and punctuation.

In business writing, follow these steps:

1. Define your purpose for writing. What should you have when you finish?

2. Make a plan
   Who must get the information?
   What form should it be in?
   What style?
   What tone?
   What information should be included?
   How should it be organized?

3. Write.

4. Check your finished piece. Did it accomplish your purpose?

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To improve legibility

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of legibility and find ways to improve it when writing on the job.

Materials: Examples of letters, notes, lists, forms, etc. that are hand written.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever had difficulty reading something because of the handwriting? What happened? Were there consequences? 2. Why is readable/legible handwriting important at home and at work.?	Suggested activities. 1. Make sure discussion covers problems that occur at home AND on the job due to unreadable handwriting. 2. Emphasize how communication may be affected by unreadable writing. What if pharmacists can't read doctors' handwriting? What are the consequences? How is productivity at work affected by unreadable handwriting?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Give students an opportunity to rate their handwriting. Is it very easy to read, average, hard to read, very difficult to read, or unreadable? 2. Discuss strategies to improve handwriting. Ask what students do to make sure their writing is readable in important situations.	1. Determine if there is a need to give anyone extra help with letter and number formation. This should be done individually so the student is not embarrassed by a lack of skill. 2. Be sure to emphasize that printing is as acceptable as cursive writing. There may be no need to pay attention to upper and lower case letters when filling out forms. Although, forms and applications look better if the letters are uniform. (MR. SMITH or Mr. Smith not MR. SmitH.) The most important strategy is to consider who will be reading this writing, and will they have a problem with it. Taking a

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	few seconds to form letters and numbers properly may be all that is necessary.

V. Workplace Application: The ability to write legibly in the workplace impacts productivity on the job.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Writing: Note writing

I. Understanding /Outcome: To identify needed information and techniques for writing effective notes.

Materials: Samples of notes, both clearly and not clearly written.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Discuss the need for writing clear notes.	1. Have you ever had someone leave a note for you? What kinds of messages were left for you? Where?
2. Read samples of notes, some clear, some unclear.	2. Did you ever have to read a note that was hard to understand? Why was it hard to understand?
3. Elicit characteristics of clearly written notes.	3. Why are some notes better than others? (Describe a good note.)

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Have the students write a note to a partner about a job-related problem. The problem can be real or imagined.	1. Discuss a few of the examples.
2. Discuss the clarity of the note received.	2. Discuss possible changes that could be made.
3. Re-write the note if needed.	

V. Workplace Application: To understand the importance of clear note-writing.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Writing: Completing Forms

I. Understanding /Outcome: To develop skill in completing workplace forms that are accurate and legible.

Materials: Site specific forms: Medical form, vacation form, etc. Supplementary materials:

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Discuss the importance of forms in work life and personal life. 2. Present samples of forms that are legible and illegible. Compare and contrast forms. 3. Discuss WHO reads the forms. Who is the audience?	Suggested activities. 1. "When do you have to fill out forms?" Instructor lists responses. 2. Why is it important to fill out forms correctly? Brainstorm the importance of correctly completed forms. 3. What happens when forms are not legible, accurately filled out, or complete? 4. What makes a form legible? 5. What are the important steps in filling out forms?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Provide a variety of forms for the student to complete. 2. The student should decide what information is needed to complete form.	1. Using suggestions from class, provide samples of forms for students to complete. 2. Compare completed forms.

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3. Make suggestions to improve legibility. 4. Identify abbreviations and discuss their meanings. 5. Discuss the variety of ways to report information. (Date: June 2, 1972; 6-2-72; 06/02/72.	

V. Workplace Application: Apply the skills learned to accurately complete forms on the job or as needed in other life situations.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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To improve accuracy in writing

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of accuracy and improve accuracy when writing on the job.

Materials: Work samples

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Recall an experience that you had because information you had was not accurate? 2. Think of events at work that have occurred because of inaccuracy?	Suggested activities. 1. We all have had experiences that are based on information being inaccurate; like trying to make a phone call only to find the number has been written down wrong; showing up for a meeting or event on the wrong day or time because it was written down inaccurately.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. How is accuracy important in your job? 2. When is accuracy necessary on your job? 3. How can you improve accuracy?	1. Filling out forms, ordering parts, etc. 2. Each person will have different responses based on their job. But it should be noted that information that is necessary for forms or that must by read by others at another time or place should be accurate. 3. Discuss strategies that help improve accuracy-- taking time to double check and concentrating on the task may be the most important strategies.

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V. Workplace Application: Forms and reports must be filled out accurately.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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To improve clarity in writing

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of clear writing and improve clarity when writing on the job.

Materials: Paper, pencils Accompanying supplementary materials: Writing scenarios and writing samples

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Have you ever read something that wasn't clear?	1. Discuss personal and work-related experiences with writing that is not clear.
2. Do you have favorite writers? Why do you like their writing?	2. Answers may vary but the focus should be on understandable style. Share your own reading experiences and tastes in reading.
3. Why is clarity necessary on the job and at home?	3. Answers may vary. Productivity and safety may be affected by unclear writing. Frustration levels may rise if written directions are not clear.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Read sample article or scenario and discuss how it could be changed to make the message clearer.	1. Instructor will read or share a sample/scenario with students. In a group, discuss how it could be changed to make the message clearer. Instructor will model the changes on the board or flip chart. It is important to point out words or sentences that are not clear so students understand the intent of the message.
2. Work in pairs on samples to determine what needs to be changed	2. Be available for individual guidance if some students do not understand. Reading

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to make the message clearer. 3. Change samples to make the message as clear as possible.	aloud may aid in understanding the problem. 3. Have students discuss the kinds of changes that were necessary to improve samples.

V. Workplace Application: Workplace communications must be clearly written to increase productivity and reduce frustration.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Plepto Cheese

My uncle did much of the grocery shopping for my aunt. Like most families, when two people work, the household chores were shared. One day he took the list she made for him to the store and began to go through it item by item. He found everything except the "plepto" cheese. He had looked through the cheese section twice, when he asked a store clerk if they carried "plepto" cheese. The clerk had never heard of it.

When he got home, they unpacked the groceries. He told her he had everything except the "plepto" cheese. She had no idea what he was talking about. She had never even heard of "plepto" cheese. He pulled out the grocery list she had written and pointed out that item on the list. She looked at it and laughed.

"That's not "plepto" cheese," she told him, "That's my abbreviation for Philadelphia cream cheese!" She had never been a great speller, and so she invented a quick way to shorten the long name. But she had never told him about her little time saver.

It's been many years since this happened, but our family still refers to Philadelphia cream cheese as "plepto."

Was the writing clear? Why not? Who was the audience for the list?

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To improve completeness in writing

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of completeness and improve completeness when writing on the job.

Materials: Examples of forms, directions, recipes, etc. that are incomplete. (To be collected by instructor and participants, from the site and from home.)

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. What if you walked into work and found a note on your desk, in handwriting that you didn't recognize that said, "See you at 2." 2. What is missing from this message?	Suggested activities. 1. Discuss the reactions to incomplete writing. 2. What makes a message complete? What should be included?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Ask what forms are used at work and what elements are important to complete? 2. Give samples of work-related forms. Ask students to discuss how forms are used on their job--insurance and vacation forms should be included.	1. Some forms don't perfectly fit the situation, so portions are left blank. 2. Encourage students to give helpful hints about filling out specific forms. Students will be the experts in many situations. If a form is particularly troublesome, schedule a company representative to explain the problem to you (the instructor) or visit the class if appropriate.

V. Workplace Application: To write with completeness to enhance productivity.

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VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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The importance of spelling and spelling improvement on the job

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of spelling and improve spelling when writing on the job.

Materials: Spelling

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever worried about writing something because you were unsure about your spelling? 2. What do you think others think when someone's writing has several spelling errors in it.	Suggested activities. 1. Determine if spelling is a problem for your students. Discuss your own problems with particular words. 2. Use job or loan applications as an example of a time when spelling might be important.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
	This lesson is not intended to be taught as a drill for a test, but to raise students' awareness and help them use resources to properly spell words.
1. Read *Spelling*.	1. This may be read orally to the class, in pairs, or individually.
2. Discuss other spelling strategies that work for students.	2. Draw out students' spelling strategies and validate them. There is no single "best" strategy. Different strategies work for different learning styles.
3. Discuss the problem of using the dictionary when you don't know how to spell the word.	3. Model how a person might guess several spellings of a word before they find the correct spelling.

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4. Demonstrate how to use a dictionary using a word that someone in the class has difficulty spelling and probably could not find in the dictionary. 5. Have students start the page in their journals to track the words that are difficult for them to spell.	4. Approach this lesson as a review, even though it is probable that many people have never been shown how to use a dictionary. Include the topics of alphabetization, guide words, syllables, accent marks, pronunciation guides, multiple definitions, and parts of speech.
Possible topics to discuss/develop: • vowels/ consonants • Prefixes/suffixes • Plurals • I before E rule • Homophones • Apostrophes • Capitalization	

V. Workplace Application: Improved spelling can improve the quality of written communication.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Spelling

There is some truth to the saying that good spellers are born, not made. Some people have the ability to spell words correctly with little effort. Others struggle with spelling their entire lives. Spelling is a function of visual memory. People who remember in pictures seem to find spelling easier. Quite often good spellers will say, "That word doesn't look right." They will rewrite the word until the "picture of the word" in their mind matches the "picture of the word" on the paper.

Keep in mind that *everyone has trouble with spelling* at times. No one knows how to spell everything!! Our language and vocabulary are constantly changing and it is difficult to keep up.

However, there are many ways to improve your spelling if you have problems spelling words correctly.

1. Keep a list of words that you know you have difficulty spelling
2. The more you read and write, the more experience you will have with troublesome words.
3. Guess at spelling words, then go to references like *The Bad Speller's Dictionary,* or a regular dictionary to verify spelling.
4. Ask coworkers for help spelling. If you only ask for a particular word once, (because you add it to your list of difficult words) chances are good that person won't mind.
5. Since each of us learns differently, use all your senses to improve spelling.
    - Say it out loud and practice spelling it.
    - Write it several times on a piece of paper.
    - Draw it with your finger on the table so you can feel the movement of writing.
    - Close your eyes and try to picture the word.
6. Use a computer which has a word processing program with a spell checker.

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Troublesome Words

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

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Grammar, punctuation and word usage

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize the importance of proper grammar and to improve grammar, punctuation, and word usage when writing on the job.

Materials: Student generated samples.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever read something that was printed that had mistakes in grammar, punctuation, or word usage? What did you think when you found that? 2. Why do we have grammar, punctuation and word usage rules?	Suggested activities. 1. Many times the writer's authority, clarity, or believability is compromised if writing rules are not followed. 2. The reason rules of writing are necessary is to make sure there is a standard way of writing. When people speak, gestures, accents, pauses, and facial expressions make it possible to understand the meaning. Written words must stand alone.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. What problems are you having with your writing? Has an instructor or supervisor pointed out mistakes to you? 2. What lessons should we focus on for the purposes of this class?	1. Raise awareness of the real world application of writing mechanics to job situations. 2. This lesson should come from the learners. If they are hesitant to talk about what they want or need to learn, the instructor should discuss some common errors that are found when reviewing job-related or class related writing.

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Possible Topics:	
• Using complete sentences • Subject - verb agreement • Using pronouns clearly • Using commas after sentence introductions • Using commas with dates and addresses • Making good word choices • Using words that are positive and sensitive • Possessives • *it's /its* • *your / you're* • *they're /there/ their* • *to/ too/ two* • Capitalization • Troublesome words	

V. Workplace Application: Better writing is improves communication.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Journaling

I. Understanding /Outcome: To improve writing skills and effectively process new learnings, ideas, and personal growth through keeping a journal.

Materials: Spiral notebook or folders with lined paper.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Introduce the idea of writing to yourself. 2. Discuss negative feelings about writing.	Suggested activities. 1. How do you feel about writing? Share experiences about likes and dislikes in regard to past school and work writing experience. 2. When do you need to write for yourself? (Home shopping lists, notes, work records, etc.) 3. Brainstorm the value of writing lists or notes to yourself?

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Students write reactions to or feelings about writing in their journals. 2. Discuss and write about the many uses of writing.	1. When I say, "I'd like you to write . . ." What comes to your mind? Write a reaction. It can be one word, a phrase, a few sentences or a page, depending on the level of the student. 2. Discuss and write about the uses of writing at home and at work. Instructor will write responses on the board.

V. Workplace Application: Writing clarifies ideas, especially when stating a problem

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or explaining a situation on the job. The ability to state thoughts, ideas and information are critical on the job.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter Lessons and Materials

Newsletter - 1 Overview of an Employee Newsletter

I. Understanding /Outcome: Raise awareness of and determine a purpose for an employee-produced newsletter.

Materials: Sample newsletters form other companies and organizations. Accompanying supplemental materials: Newsletter suggestions

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. What's the difference between a newspaper and a newsletter?	Brain storm the differences between newsletters and newspapers. (Size of paper, the length, the scope of the content, etc.)
2. What kind of organizations have newsletters?	2. Instructor lists responses from the group.
3. Do you get any newsletters?	3. Discuss individual experiences with newsletters. Are they helpful?
4. What is the purpose of a newsletter?	4. List responses from the group.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Look at a variety of newsletters and determine the most common parts.	1. List responses from the group. (Calendar of events, recipes, profiles of individuals, editorial/opinion articles, feature articles, want ads, cartoons, art, humor, fiction, etc.)
2. Ask students to decide which parts they like best.	

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3. If the worksite had a newsletter, what parts would be of interest to employees?	

V. Workplace Application: An employee newsletter provides an avenue for improvement of communication skills--reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter Suggestions

1. Have the group think of possible titles for the newsletter. It could be the subject of an article in the first issue.

2. Decide who should get the newsletter. All employees, classes only, certain departments, etc.

3. Discuss how often you will try to publish the newsletter.

4. Find meaningful tasks for people with all levels of skills. Not everyone needs to write an article. Some people may choose to find pictures, cartoons, collect want ads, etc.

5. Choose a standard format that will be followed in each publication. For example:

- Interviews
- Profiles of employees
- Hobbies or sports
- Opinions/Editorial
- Features about events at the work site.
    - Advice column (Dear "Abby" style)
    - Cartoons
    - Humor--Jokes
        - Short stories
            - My most unforgettable character
            - My most embarrassing moment
            - Crazy things that happen on the job
    - Art work
    - Recipes
    - Want ads
    - Announcements
        - Marriages
        - Births / Deaths
        - Illnesses
        - Events
        - Promotions
        - Retirements

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Newsletter 2: Rewriting and limiting

I. Understanding /Outcome: To understand the steps of prewriting and limiting topics for newsletter articles.

Materials: Paper, pencils Accompanying supplemental materials: See example of semantic map.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Have you ever written anything that was published?	1. Discuss responses, if any. Ask if writing was edited or changed before being published.
2. Have you ever written something that you changed many times so it said exactly what you wanted it to say?	2. Possible memory triggers are: Letters for insurance claims, medical problems, letters to the editor, assignments for classes.
3. Have you ever done something that took several steps to complete?	3. Draw parallels from students' experiences to writing process.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Brainstorm ideas or topics that students would be interested in writing about.	1. Instructor will list responses on the board and make suggestions if necessary. Possibilities are: Fishing, motorcycles, food, restaurants, cars, sports, etc.
2. As a group, pick one topic and write all responses that are suggested.	2. Instructor should model semantic map of topic chosen. Write down everything that comers to mind without editing or organizing the information.
3. Learners will choose one topic from the list and write down everything that comes to mind about	3. If time allows, discuss the instructor's semantic map. Organize the responses into

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that topic. 4. Students look at their semantic maps to determine which aspect would be suitable for a newsletter article.	categories or groups that make sense. 4. Discuss how to narrow a topic to fit into a newsletter format. Why is it necessary to limit a topic? (Space considerations, too involved, too broad to be informative, etc.)

V. Workplace Application: Improves reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter 3: Drafting articles

I. Understanding /Outcome: To draft an article based on a semantic map.

Materials: Semantic map from prewriting activity, paper, pencils.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Review prewriting activity of brainstorming and semantic mapping of topic.	1. Make sure everyone has done the prewriting activity. So far you have chosen a topic, brainstormed everything you can think of about that topic. Then look at the things you have written and try to organize or limit the information you will write about.
2. What is a rough draft? Why is it necessary?	2. Discuss why a rough draft is necessary. Compare a rough draft to sketches artists make before they paint pictures; the clay models of cars before they are manufactured. (The purpose of the rough draft is to get thoughts and main ideas down without regard to spelling and punctuation.)

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. As a group, students will suggest statements for a rough draft of the instructor's topic.	1. The instructor will write a rough draft on the chosen topic from the prewriting activity based on the students suggestion.
2. The students will write a rough draft for their topics based on the semantic maps they constructed during the previous prewriting activity.	2. Instructor's suggestions should include: a. Just get your thoughts down don't worry about anything else. b. Keep writing. If you can't think of anything, write, "I can't think of anything to

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	write." c. Write down anything that comes to your mind.
Point out that this is what real writers do. They write the rough draft and then come back to it after it rests a while to see if they said what they really wanted it to say.	Advise students to write on every other line on the front (only) of lined paper. This will help during the revising step.

V. Workplace Application: Improvement of writing skills raises the awareness of the importance of job-related writing.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter-4: Revising articles for clarity

I. Understanding /Outcome: The process of revising a rough draft for clarity.

Materials: Rough draft from previous lesson, paper, pencils.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Review the rough draft activity.	1. Make sure everyone has written a rough draft. Review the rough draft and answer any questions related to it.
2. Discuss what is necessary to make the draft more readable or clearer for the audience who will read it.	2. Who will read your newsletter article? Consider age, reading ability, background knowledge of reader on that topic, etc.
3. What makes something readable? What makes you stop reading an article?	3. Discuss word choice, use of jargon or abbreviations, length of sentences, etc.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. As a group, students will suggest ways to revise the instructor's rough draft. Discuss reasons for changes.	1. The instructor will demonstrate revising the rough draft that was generated in the previous lesson. Discuss the audience for this article. Consider how the article might change depending on the intended audience. Consider whether it says what was intended; if it is interesting; if there is something that could be changed to make it clearer; etc.
2. Students will revise rough draft of their topic.	2. Some students find it helpful to read their drafts aloud to a partner for suggestions. Ask students to consider word choice, use of jargon or abbreviations, length of sentences,

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	etc.
3. In pairs, read revised draft to their partner for comments or suggestions for improvement.	3. Encourage students to make positive comments on the strengths of the article as well as suggestions for improvement.

V. Workplace Application: The ability to revise and clarify written communication can improve job-related writing.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter 5: Editing articles

I. Understanding /Outcome: The process of editing articles for spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical problems.

Materials: Revised draft from previous lesson, paper, pencils.

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge.	Suggested activities.
1. Review revising activity.	1. Make sure everyone has completed the revising activity. Review and answer any questions related to it.
2. Discuss the meaning of editing. What are the "mechanics of writing?"	2. Editing focuses on spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, capitalization, etc., all mechanical considerations of writing.
3. Discuss the job of the copy editor at a newspaper?	3. Copy editors are responsible for the correctness of the final articles before publication.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. As a group, students will suggest ways to edit instructor's revised article.	1. The instructor will demonstrate editing the revised draft that was generated by the previous lesson. Care should be taken to have a revised copy that is in need of editing. (Remember, this lesson is designed to model the skill of editing, so don't write a perfect rough draft.)
2. Students edit their own revised articles. Then exchange articles with others for editing suggestions.	2. The usual components of editing are spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Suggest that students look at words to check for spelling starting from the end and working forward. Sentences should be read one by one

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3. Students make a final edited copy.	to see if they are complete and if subject and verb agree.

V. Workplace Application: Increased awareness of editing skills can improve written communication on the job.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Newsletter 6: Editorial Writing

I. Understanding /Outcome: To recognize that editorial writing expresses an opinion that can be supported or refuted.

Materials: Paper, pencils

III. Demonstration	
Activate prior knowledge. 1. Have you ever felt strongly enough about an issue to write a letter to an editor in a newspaper or magazine? 2. What are the usual topics that people usually have strong opinions about.	Suggested activities. 1. For purposes of discussion, avoid the subjects of politics and religion. A less inflammatory subject is necessary to have a meaningful discussion on two sides of an issue. 2. List the kinds of issues on which students have strong opinions.

IV. Exercise/Engagement:	
1. Brainstorm some timely questions for writing an opinion piece. 2. In pairs or individually, ask students to construct a semantic map that gives reasons to support one side of a question. Then do another semantic map taking the opposite side.	1. List a number of questions that students have an opinion about that are not too "hot." Ex. Are professional athletes paid too much? Should there be casino gambling in Detroit? Should the State Fair stay at the present location? 2. Demonstrate the possible reasons that support one side of a question using a semantic map. then do another semantic map taking the opposite side.

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V. Workplace Application: The communication skill of effectively expressing a position on an issue in a logical, clear, organized way is valuable in the workplace.

VI. Evaluation/Comments:

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Glossary

accurate- without mistakes or errors

acronym- a word formed from the first letter of each of the words in a phrase.

Ex. AIDS = Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

adapt- to adjust to a particular use or situation

appropriate- suitable or fitting

audience- the person or persons who listen to you speak or read what you write

audiologist - a person who evaluates hearing problems and advises treatment for them

behavioral skills- the way a person uses actions and reactions in regard to communicating with others

body language - gestures, facial expressions, posture, and movements that communicate to others without words.

brainstorm - a problem solving technique where all member of a group contribute ideas spontaneously (off the top of their head)

characteristics - serving to identify or set apart

clarity - the quality of being clear, easy to understand

communication - the exchange of ideas, messages or information by reading, writing, speaking, listening, and signals

competence - able to do a task properly

compliant - a tendency to give in to the will of others, to go along with

confidence - feeling sure or certain of yourself, feeling OK

conscious - aware of what is happening

credible- trustworthy or believable

defuse- to make less tense, dangerous, or hostile

draft - to write a preliminary plan or version

editing - to prepare for publishing by adapting or correcting

editorial - an article expressing an opinion

energetic - full of energy

enhance - to make better or clearer

evaluate - to determine the value, to rate or appraise

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format - the plan or organization of a piece of writing, example: a memo, a report, an editorial, a business letter

grammar - the accepted structure and rules related to standard language

impression- a feeling or image one gets as a result of an experience

incompetence - not able to do a task properly

interpersonal- relating to relationships between people

introduction - to provide first knowledge or first experience with something

journal - a personal record of experience and observations kept on a regular basis, possibly daily or weekly

legible - handwriting that is easily read

Maslow, Abraham -

negative - not positive, not constructive

objective- a goal

oral - spoken out loud

overview- a broad look at a topic without a lot of detail

pertinent - to be related to a topic, pertains to, is relevant

policy- a plan that determines decisions or actions

positive - a good thing

predisposition - tend to favor something in advance

procedure - a set of methods or actions for doing something

profile - an article about someone telling their most remarkable characteristics and accomplishments

punctuation - a standard set of marks used in writing; periods, commas, colons, semicolons, etc.

refuted - proved to be false or mistaken

relevant - related to the matter at hand, pertinent

rough draft - the first version of a piece of writing

scan - to look over a piece of writing to find a particular piece of information Ex. finding the time a certain movie starts at a particular show.

semantic map - a picture or diagram of important ideas and details that helps you remember or organize

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skim - to glance over a reading selection to get a general understanding of its content, sometimes reading just subtitles or the first sentence of each paragraph.

strategy- a plan of action

supplementary - something added for extra information

T-Chart - a chart shaped like the letter "T" that is labeled "looks like" on the left side and "sounds like" on the right side. It is helpful to use when trying to understand what one might see and hear when watching a person doing a certain behavior.

theory - an educated guess based on some knowledge or information that one tries to prove to be true.

unconscious - not aware

vocabulary - the list of words that is common to a topic. Topics like real estate, truck driving, or computers each have their own lists of words.

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Name _____ Date _____

Preview - Effective Communication

1. What is a behavior that shows active listening? _____

2. Why is understanding body language important to effective communication?

3. What is an example of body language getting in the way of communication? _____

4. In general, which is more important--how a person talks *or* what a person says? _____

5. Give an example of what a speaker can do to change the way s/he talks to fit the audience? _____

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6. Why is it important to have good communciation skills a work?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What is the main difference between editorial writing and report writing? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Being a good speaker is something you're born with, you can't really change much. True False

9. Listening is a skill that is seldom taught. True False

10. There are reading strategies that help one find information in written materials. True False

11. Good readers change the way they read depending on what they are reading. True False

12. Good readers read detailed directions differently than they read the newspaper. True False

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13. Good writers change the way they write depending on what they are writing. True False

14. Good listeners are born, not made. True False

15. I would like to improve my reading skills. Yes No Unsure

16. I would like to improve my writing skills. Yes No Unsure

17. need to work on putting my ideas down on paper. Yes No Unsure

18. I need to work on spelling. Yes No Unsure

19. I need to work on legibility; writing so others can read it. Yes No Unsure

20. I would like to improve my speaking skills Yes No Unsure

21. People don't listen the way I'd like them to when I talk. Yes No Unsure

22. I would like to improve my listening skills. Yes No Unsure

23. I have a hard time paying attention when people talk to me Yes No Unsure

24. In this class, I hope to learn about _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Name _____ Date _____

Review - Effective Communication

1. What is a behavior that shows active listening? _____

2. Why is understanding body language important to effective communication?

3. What is an example of body language getting in the way of communication? _____

4. In general, which is more important-- how a person talks *or* what a person says? _____

5. Give an example of what a speaker can do to change the way s/he talks to fit the audience? _____

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6. Why is it important to have good communciation skills at work?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What is the main difference between editorial writing and report writing? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Being a good speaker is something you're born with, you can't really change much. True False

9. Listening is a skill that is seldom taught. True False

10. There are reading strategies that help one find information in written materials. True False

11. Good readers change the way they read depending on what they are reading. True False

12. Good readers read detailed directions differently than they read the newspaper. True False

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13. Good writers change the way they write depending on what they arewriting. True False

14. Good listeners are born, not made. True False

15. I have improved my reading skills. Yes No Unsure

16. I have improved my writing skills. Yes No Unsure

17. I put my ideas down on paper better since taking this class. Yes No Unsure

18. I have learned ways to improve my spelling. Yes No Unsure

19. My writing is more legible since taking this class. Yes No Unsure

20. I have improved my speaking skills Yes No Unsure

21. When I talk, people are more likely to listen now than before. Yes No Unsure

22. I have improved my listening skills. Yes No Unsure

23. When people talk to me, my attention has improved Yes No Unsure

24. In this class, the most important thing I learned about was _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Answer Key to Effective Communication I- Preview/Review

1. The listener makes eye contact, keeps eyes focused on speaker. The listener nods or tilts head as speaker talks. The listener is engaged in the speaker's message. He may lean forward, but is not overly relaxed. Any description of behavior that supports good listening is acceptable.

2. Body language gives the speaker and listener many signals regarding how his message is being received or given.

3. Any example showing that the speaker or listener is angry, tense, distracted, bored, emotionally out of control, etc. is acceptable.

4. Generally, *how* a person talks has more weight than *what* a person says.

5. Any example that shows the speaker tailoring the message to meet the audience' needs is acceptable. Examples: Can use words that are easier to understand if the audience does not have a good background in the topic. Can shorten the talk if the audience if out of time. Can give more or less detail as required by the audience.

6. Clear communication is a part of nearly everyone's job. Employees are evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively all the time.

7. Editorial writing expresses the opinion of the writer. Report writing is based on facts.

8. False Speaking skills can be learned and practiced and great change can occur.

9. True Schools and colleges seldom teach listening skills, though it is the communication skill we use the most daily. (communication skills being reading, writing, speaking, and listening)

10. True Skimming and scanning techniques are designed to help one find information in written materials.

11. True Readers change speed depending on what they read. For example, directions may be read slowly, almost word by word. Newspapers and magazine may be skimmed or scanned.

12. True Writers write differently for different audiences. Notes scribbled as reminders to one's self may be written quite differently than an important letter.

13. False Listening skills can be learned and improved.

14 - 23 are self inventory questions. The preview questions give the teacher an indication of how the studdents assess their skills at the beginning of the class. The review questions are to be used by teacher to better assess participants' gains as the class ends.

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Stephen Covey

(Taken from USA Weekend, Jan 12-14, 1996 article written by Julia Lawlor)

Provo, Utah-- Joshua Covey has just turned 16 and wants to use Mom and Dad's car. In some families, this could be the beginning of a war between the generations. But when your father is Stephen Covey, personal development expert and author of the best seller, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,* there's always Habit 4 to consider (Think win-win, seek solutions that benefit all parties.) Joshua gets the keys to the Bronco as long as he drives responsibly, agrees to chauffeur other family members and does his homework and chores without being reminded.

Simple, right? "The 7 Habits," Covey likes to say, "are really common sense, organized." Yet his message-- stressing such principles as kindness, integrity, honesty, patience and loyalty--has struck an uncommon chord. More than 6 million copies of his book have been sold in North America alone, and it has been translated into 28 languages. From his humble beginnings as a business professor at Brigham Young University, the 63-year -old Covey has become a sought-after speaker who jets around the country commanding $45,000 an appearance. Now that he's conquered the corporate world, he's turned his attention to the building block of society: ***the family.***

According to the director of the Trends Research Institute in Rhinebeck, NY, Gerald Celente, "Covey's ideas may not be revolutionary, but they have captured the attention of millions who yearn for a return to 'moral decency.' This basic message is not being taught at home or school and is not being fostered in the workplace. People are looking for direction. They're lost."

Covey and his wife, Sandra, 59, have nine children, from 16 to 38 years old. His family serves as a laboratory for his ideas. Sixteen years ago, the family actually wrote its own mission statement, one of the cornerstones of Covey's philosophy. The idea is to "begin with then end in mind" by clarifying what's important. What kind of family do you want? How do you want your kids to remember you? What values do you want to impart?

Covey says that when you marry, you come from two different backgrounds, two different scripts. You have to decide what is the script for your marriage. Doing so is not easy, especially if children are involved. The Covey's mission statement took eight months to complete. At one point, on of the sons, Sean, then a football-obsessed teenager, suggested that the mission statement read: "We're one heck of a family and we kick butt." In the end, they agreed on "To create a nurturing place of faith, order, truth, love, happiness, and relaxation, and to provide opportunity for each person to become responsibly independent and effectively interdependent in order to serve worthy purposes in society."

Having a mission statement is only the beginning. Covey says regular family meetings where parents and children plan for upcoming events, talk over problems and measure themselves against their mission statement, are essential to a functioning family.

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Though Covey is not a psychologist, (he has an Masters degree in Business Administration from Harvard and a doctorate in education from Brigham Young University) his approach is generally applauded. "These are sound ideas," says Tony Jurich, president-elect of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. "We have this weird notion in our culture that we don't have to think about our families, that they just happen naturally. They don't. The things Covey talks about are normal maintenance families need so they don't fall into disrepair."

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Test your family habits

This quiz adapts Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People specifically to families. **Read each** statement and circle the answer that indicates how well YOU perform in your family in the following areas.

Habit 1: Be pro-active

1. I take responsibility for my moods and actions at home rather than blaming other family members and making excuses.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

2. I consciously work to solve family problems rather than ignoring or avoiding them.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

3. I focus my efforts in the family on the things I can do something about rather than complaining about things beyond my control.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind

4. I help my family develop a clear sense of how we want to treat one another, what we value, and what we want to become.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

5. I've identified the important skills and traits I would like my family members to use in their dealings with others.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

6. I am aware of the unseen potential in members of my family and help them see and realize it.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 3: Put first things first.

7. I do not allow the important family activities of my life to get lost in the crises and busy activities of my days.

   3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

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8. I lead in making special family activities, vacations, traditions, holidays, birthdays, and so on, a priority through long-range planning.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

9. I keep promises and honor commitments made to my family.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 4: Think win-win

10. I'm truly happy when members of my family succeed.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

11. When solving conflicts in the family, I strive to find solutions that benefit all.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

12. I strive to foster cooperation rather than competition among family members.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood.

13. I am sensitive to the feelings of each member of my family.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

14. I seek to understand the viewpoints of others.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

15. When listening to others in my family, I try to see things from their perspective, rather than just my own.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 6: Synergize

16. Even when I hold strong opinions on issues, I encourage others in the family to express differing viewpoints.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

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17. I work to find creative solutions to family problems that benefit all.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

18. I value and seek out other's insights.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Habit 7: Sharpen the saw (engage in continuous improvement)

19. I help my family take time to find meaning and enjoyment in life.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

20. I care for my physical health and well-being and encourage my family to do the same.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

21. I encourage my family to develop new skills and abilities through my own example.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

22. I build and strengthen family relationships by being considerate and by apologizing when I make mistakes.

3 Always 2 Sometimes 1 Never

Score yourself

Add the numbers next to your answers. If you scored:

50-66--You practice the 7 Habits much of the time in your family. Keep up the good work!

35-49-- You practice many of the 7 Habits. Concentrate on those habits where your score is lower.

22-35--Pick ONE habit and work to improve it for a while before proceeding to another. Remember that lasting change takes patience and perseverance. Save this quiz and take it again in a few months.

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